



Public Comments from May 13 Community Forum

At the Community Forum last Thursday, in addition to spoken comments and questions gathered by note takers, we received 14 of the blue “We Want to Hear From You” forms. All of those comments are grouped as follows:

- I. Drainage and Open Space Options
 - Public Forum Comments
 - Written Comments
- II. South Lot Development Proposal
 - Public Forum Comments
 - Written Comments
- III. Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan
 - Public Forum Comments
 - Written Comments
- IV. Open House Comments and Additional Issues
 - Written comments only

We also have a 60-page transcript of the forum portion of the evening, which Mark Troxel (mark.troxel@seattle.gov or 206-615-1739) will provide on request.

Summary of Community Forum Comments

I. Three Drainage and Open Space Options – Public Forum Comments

(Note taker: Roque Deherrera)

Stakeholder Panelists

Janet Way
Kevin Wallace
John Lombard

Public Comment Sign-up Sheet

1. Chuck Dolan
2. Gloria Butts
3. Renee Barton
4. Bob Messina
5. Louise McDonald
6. Ken Meyer
7. Kevin Fullerton
8. Wayne Johnson
9. Sylvia Scott

10. Dan Stearn
11. Skip Knox

Record of Public Comment

1. Chuck Dolan, Maple Leaf Resident
 - Favors the hybrid approach, which is a positive for fish habitat.
 - **Question:** Is SPU Presenting? Will more technical information be provided?
 - **Answer:** No, but there is much written material, and Mrs. Peg Gainer is available [people clap for Mr. Gainer].
2. Gloria Butts, involved since the 1950's
 - Provided an answer to Kevin Wallace: Seven Million is worth the benefit. It will benefit people.
 - Thanked the Thornton Creek Alliance for the "orange sheet."
 - Supports the hybrid option... will help with pollution, clean water, getting salmon and other wildlife back.
3. Renee Barton
 - Supports the hybrid option.
 - Said that employers can pay employees less money because of the benefits of a greenbelt. *The note taker was confused by this comment.*
4. Bob Messina, Licton Springs Resident
 - Congratulated everyone, saying that "we are arriving at the best decision."
 - Sited Ashworth as a great place... wishes the creek were in the public realm... sees it as a vision for Northgate.
 - Supports the aesthetics appeal of the hybrid option... is willing to pay for it in his water bill.
 - Said that there is a real benefit to the sound of running water.
5. Louise McDonald
 - Is concerned about salmon... wants salmon to return.
 - Hadn't heard of the hybrid option before the meeting.
 - **Question:** Is the hybrid option friendly to salmon?
 - **Answer:** Janet Way said ... the Department of Fish and Wildlife say yes.
 - **Answer:** John Lombard says it is fish passable for cutthroat trout... but that it is unlikely that salmon will be found that far up stream. John also said that the hybrid should benefit fish that are downstream from Northgate.
 - In response to Kevin Wallace's earlier comment regarding the water quality of the lake, said that the fish care about the water quality, even if people don't drink from the lake.

6. Ken Meyer

- **Question:** Thought the pictures presented were nice, but is curious about the history of the south lot issue. He commented that it was easy to cover up the creek and didn't understand why it was so hard to open it back up.
- **Answer:** Janet Way that it was a bit tricky to uncover a stream. She sited a project she worked on in Shoreline, saying it only took them a week or two to uncover a stream... but that there are issues to consider that take time.
- He criticizes Mr. Wallace's comments ... "it isn't about the money."
- **Question:** Does the mall have a run off quota that must be met?
- **Answer:** Janet Way said that she wasn't sure exactly what is required, but something is.

7. Kevin Fullerton

- Said that suspended solids and flash flooding causes many problems down stream.
- Said that seven million dollars was worth it.
- **Question:** How is vegetation supported in the natural system option?
- **Answer:** Janet Way said that it is difficult, but through use of certain plant species, it was possible.

8. Wayne Johnson

- **Question:** What plans are there for down stream? Why are we just talking about the south lot?
- **Answer:** The south lot is the charge of the group. However, there are overall plans for Park 6, which includes downstream areas. The panel directed Mr. Johnson to SPU staff.

9. Sylvia Scott

- **Question:** Does SPU endorse the hybrid option?
- **Answer:** John Lombard said that SPU hasn't formally endorsed the option, but that it is likely that they will. John went on to talk about the benefits of the hybrid option... that it collected 700 acres worth of water and that SPU would require that the hybrid option performs as well as the natural option – early models show that it will.

10. Dan Stearn

- Said that cost should be a factor in the decision.
- Said that the project was valid.
- Then he asked two rhetorical questions. "Have you ever bought a piece of art work?" and "Why did you buy it?" The crowd was puzzled.

11. Skip Knox

- Additional tubes should be studied as an option to control drainage, or underground storage tanks or holes.
- **Question:** Have these things been considered?
- **Answer:** Janet said that there they were considering higher tech options, but that there would be many more opportunities and options for the Lorig development.
- **Question:** Can the community do the planting and other work to cut some of the costs for the project
- **Answer:** No answer was given.

Three Drainage and Open Space Options – Written Comments

Respondent a.:

Hybrid design is a good idea. It complements open space while cleaning runoff. The water-flow control, while perhaps not meeting Seattle Public Utilities flood control expectations, is infinitely better than the current situation.

Respondent b. (Marcia Sanders):

Thornton Creek – absolutely important to do! Seven million dollars, over the many years of the future, is negligible. We need to regain the creek and its wildlife! Hybrid sounds good.

Respondent c.:

Hybrid is the best.

Respondent d.:

Hybrid All the Way! Support & nurture Lorig's development. Both members of our household support this. Regarding the cost issue, the mayor's original plan for the "drainage pond" included a provision that SPU include at least \$5 million in its capital improvement project budget. The mayor's "pond" idea was shot down; but not on cost! This hybrid is a much better idea and worthy of the budget.

Respondent e.:

Choose hybrid

- best bang for the buck
- cleans largest area of runoff with best aesthetics
- evens out the most frequent, most damaging, smaller flash floods

Respondent f.:

The Hybrid plan is much too expensive considering the value of the project. At what expense to the home owners in the area is this development being considered?

Respondent g. (Chuck Caldart):

While Kevin Wallace's question – what would Northgate residents get for their \$7 million? – is a reasonable one in the abstract, the fact that he asks it after having sat as member of this panel suggests that he hasn't been paying attention. He might as well ask whether there is any value to a park. The aesthetic, water quality, aquatic life, wildlife, and other benefits that would flow from the hybrid or the daylighting option appear obvious. As a near-Northgate Community resident, I can say without qualification that these improvements would enhance the quality of life – and the attractiveness to business – of the Northgate Community.

Respondent h.:

Hybrid option is what should be done. It artfully combines daylighting benefits – habitat, aesthetics – with practical considerations of filtration and flood control.

Respondent k.:

Nice, but this is enriching a private developer with private funds. We need an offsetting public gain.

Respondent l.:

I support the choice that has the best chance of restoring historic salmon runs – despite the presence of barriers further downstream. Salmon are an irreplaceable sacred icon of the NW and a sacrament to the Native Americans. (I believe the other barriers can be removed and that salmon are resilient. We have seen them return to Piper's Creek!) I support this option no matter the cost. Salmon are priceless. It was sacrilege to have killed this run and we need to make reparations now that we have the opportunity.

Respondent m.:

The Hybrid Option sounds like by far the best choice for the community, the new retail/living space, and the environment. I think money spent on the Hybrid Option would be money well spent – and it would “pay” for itself for decades to come as a boost to the environment and a draw for the community. Please give strong consideration to the Hybrid Option.

Respondent n.:

Well presented by panel! I vote for the hybrid option! Thonton Creek Legal Defense Fund orange sheet gives good reasons very articulately. Good speakers, questions, and good answers!

II. South Lot Development Proposal – Public Forum Comments

(Note taker: Lyle Bicknell)

Stakeholder Panelists

Gary Weber
Janice Camp
Brad Larssen

Public Comment

1. Guy Astley
2. Greg Cassity
3. Lloyd Weatherford
4. Roger A. Workman
5. Jan Brucker

1. Guy Astley

- Underscored the importance of including an apprenticeship program as part of the south lot development.
- This program would produce skilled, family wage workers with healthcare benefits. Referenced a six acre threshold and felt that the 5.9 acre municipal property was devised to thwart this requirement.
- He believed the development should be a partnership and that Davis-Bacon (the Davis-Bacon Wage Determinations Rules) should apply.

2. Greg Cassity

- Questioned whether the land swap would result in a loss of jobs?

Ron LaFayette responded that this was beyond the assignment of the stakeholders. Should be taken up with the City Council.

3. Lloyd Weatherford

- Felt that this project would enrich a private developer and that the apprenticeship set asides is a small price to pay to support living wages.

4. Roger Workman

- Spoke strongly in favor of hiring union workers.

5. Jan Brucker

- Believed the new creek proposal was a far more sensitive scheme than we have seen before, is transformative and will create something more than just a mall experience. She is thrilled to see people in attendance and felt the group had made great strides.

South Lot Development Proposal – Written Comments

Respondent b. (Marcia Sanders):

Important to take time to look at new proposed plan with Lorig. Are we just subsidizing a nice park for a private enterprise?? Also important to have union labor and apprentices!

Respondent c.:

Development should stand alone, not be tied to parking off-site or shared elsewhere. Allow extra height only for housing.

Respondent d.:

- I like what I see so far. I could see the core buildings on the site rising higher than they are planned – as long as they are still “wrapped” by the lower rise street-side housing.
- In the “C” building, make an archway [sketch included], which would allow pedestrians to go through the middle. Put retail on the 103rd St. side, café tables (that go in at night) under the arch.
- The reconfiguring of the parcel to accommodate the creek pipe (the land swap) makes sense if the City will go along with the hybrid option (least likely to engender further lawsuits).

Respondent e.:

- I would like to see a post office for commuters near transit amenities.
- It would also be great to have a library book return drop box near transit stops!

Respondent h.:

Should be done in conjunction with the Thornton Creek Hybrid option

Respondent j.:

More housing will only add to more cars on small streets.

Respondent k.:

This is a tremendous opportunity to provide training opportunities via apprenticeship set asides that will be squandered if the City goes ahead with the land swap without requiring Lorig to commit to a 15% of all hours to be work by apprentices in state-certified programs. This is a small price to pay for a great investment in our future.

Respondent l.:

I support the concept that some housing be truly affordable to low-income persons. Also that union labor at prevailing wages be used in construction. Some contracts also need to go to businesses owned by minorities and women.

Respondent m.:

I think that Brad Larssen's concerns should be addressed/responded to ASAP. I like Lorig's plans for the South Lot, but please give labor its due. Please support living wages.

Respondent n.:

Get City moving to make purchase ASAP! Partner with Lorig. How does apprenticing and union workers fit in with City work and developer? Speakers were good, but more details on City policies are needed.

III. Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan – Public Forum Comments (Notetaker – Scott Dvorak)

Stakeholder Panelists

Barbara Maxwell
Ron Posthuma
Shawn Oleson

Additional comments from Planning Commissioner Thomas Eanes

Public Comment Sign-up Sheet

1. Gloria Butts
2. Jim Padden

1. Gloria Butts

- Asked the panel to look at the Pedestrian Workshop along with the big Northgate Workshops that were held earlier. There were many ideas expressed at those workshops - not just items captured in the notes, but things that were said at the workshops.
- It will take some wizardry to clear up gridlock at Northgate Way, but it needs to be addressed.
- Not really pleased with the location of the community center, library, and pedestrian crossing on Fifth Avenue. Please do some testing before it is final - testing with real people and real cars to see if it works - and then make some tweaks if necessary.
- Connection to the west side of I-5 is important and needs to be addressed.
- Focus, focus, focus on pedestrians. You can't get to the bus stops, transit center, shopping mall entrance, etc. without walking. Ultimately, everyone is a pedestrian for some part of the trip. Make the pedestrian journey safe.
- I hope the workshop will address the west side of the mall.

2. Jim Padden

- Concerned about the five communities surrounding Northgate. We're losing one of them - Licton Springs - to traffic, condo and

apartment development, and other development creeping up Fifth Avenue.

- Maple Leaf did a great job on 85th.
- I would like to see a north/south off ramp to get in to this area. Maybe at 92nd to Maple Leaf and Northgate. No on ramps.
- Meridian has been shut down because of speeding and drainage problems. It could be changed to a one way street in the direction of the school. Goal is to take some pressure off of Licton Springs.

Tom Eanes - Planning Commission

Planning Commission has been active in Northgate for many years. We have a long commitment to the pedestrian environment in the area.

Survey sent out - we received 100 responses. They are available at the library and online.

75 people were at the workshop in March. There is a clear sense of what pedestrian connections and needs are. We have a clear focus that we take into the pedestrian and open space planning process. The results of the workshop are reflected on the map available tonight.

The mall is auto-oriented of course; however, several potential pedestrian connections to the mall were identified. There are major barriers to pedestrians in the area; Northgate Way, Fifth Avenue, I-5, and 103rd.

Some of the ideas brought forward:

- improve pedestrian connections to key destinations
- pedestrian bridge across I-5
- develop clear pedestrian paths to and from the mall
- skybridge to connect Target to Northgate Mall
- create a Northgate identity, which is beginning on Fifth Avenue
- putting in sidewalk
- open South Lot development with key entrances and connections to the mall

Planning Commission will continue to work with the stakeholders and DPD to develop this plan. A draft could be available in the next few weeks.

Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan – Written Comments

Respondent a.:

Two transportation issues for consideration when looking at street improvement

- 8th Ave NE – from Northgate Way to 120th and
- NE 115th Street – from 5th Ave to Roosevelt Way

Both streets extremely wide with only a few intersections allows for speeding cars. Ideally need to lessen traffic or/and slow it down.

Respondent b. (Marcia Sanders):

Re: Sidewalks in adjacent streets: We don't have and we don't want sidewalks. Ecologically, soil is better.

Respondent c.:

- Park & Ride attracts more cars and more congestion.
- Putting developments on parking podium create bad streetscape and limits circulation – just another super block.
- Connect Transit Center to NSCC with pedestrian bridge or tunnel.
- Direct bus access to Transit Center from I-5 express lanes

Respondent d.:

Will there be a mechanism for getting projects on the list once the initial list is made? I see very few projects on the SDOT Capital Improvement (2003-2004) list that are anything by regularly scheduled maintenance that most neighborhoods routinely get. (\$117K out of \$1,303,000 is nonroutine repaving.) The new stuff (the stuff we want more of!) is only 11% of the budget, and almost half of that is not even approved! (\$50K for one traffic light.) I hope the new projects list reshifts this balance. Transportation issue: There is a jog in Northgate Way, just west of the mall entrance that confuses drivers to inadvertently switch lanes. If the median were graduated at an angle, this would help. How about an art installation on Northgate Way under I-5 using bright lights to make it feel safer but discourage hanging out?

Respondent e.:

- I would like to see a post office for commuters near transit amenities.
- It would also be great to have library book return box near transit stops!

Respondent h.:

Extend Light Rail to Northgate!

Respondent i.:

It seems to me that the east-west movement of transit and pedestrians may be significantly improved by providing an alternative east-west for peds and transit by an NW 103rd Street. If the NE 103rd Street express lane ingress/egress route were extended west, under I-5 to, say, Aurora, then peds and transit would have an alternative, more pleasant, route as compared to NE Northgate Way. It also may be desirable to provide a direct offramp from the mainline northbound I-5 lanes to NE 103rd St. for more direct access for transit to the future transit center.

Respondent k.:

I like the urban village model.

Respondent n.:

Take another look for the good, creative ideas from earlier Northgate workshops. Do some pre-testing of plans for 5th Ave. and connection to mall and buses, library and community center and park space before they are built and trees planted! Need parking along street (5th Ave) for safety of pedestrians. BIG FOCUS on pedestrian paths – I-5 connection to west. Northgate's west side to and from transit stations.

IV. Written Comments on the Open House

Ten of 13 respondents indicated, by checking a “yes” box, that they found the meeting informative. An eleventh wrote “somewhat.” One respondent checked the “no” box, adding: “Not much new presented, but I thought the meeting was to get input from us.”

Seven respondents indicated that they felt their concerns were heard or recorded. Three additional respondents gave the following narrative answers:

- Did not see anyone taking notes, but many stakeholders were in audience to hear our comments.
- Hopefully, someone will read this form.
- Hard to tell.

Respondent d.:

Nice computer-generated images of what the South Lot will look like. I like the CTIP board's flag system.

Respondent j.:

To help Northgate come to life, bring back some of the stores that started the mall. Two dime stores ([New Penny] and Woolworth's), two drug stores (Pay 'n Save and Bartell's), a big hardware store, two grocery stores (A&P and Thriftway), a post office, hospital. All gone. You can't even buy a spool of thread, light bulb, or hammer, let alone a prescription or a piece of yardage for sewing. More housing will only add to more cars on small streets. Not people trying to buy anything in the mall.

Respondent n.:

Good space, good food. Thanks! Good space and nice large screen. Room arrangement good. Thanks for food and drink. It was tasty and really helped reduce exhaustion.